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April 4, 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR
THE PRESIDENT

1. Here's a first-rate interim memorandum on Berlin from Dean Acheson. It sharpens the issues and offers a base from which you may wish to make one or two comments to Macmillan.

2. Acheson argues: Berlin is of first importance; a crisis is likely this year; we have no good answer to Soviet pressure upon the routes of communication;

3. His major conclusion is that we must be ready to use force in substantial amounts.

4. Acheson urges study of the following possible courses of action, all of which I think he is likely to support as his work goes on:

5. With respect to Macmillan's visit: It seems to me that there is every reason to press strongly upon the British our determination to stand firm here. Attempts to negotiate this problem out of existence have failed in the past, and there is none which gives promise of success now. We should of course be willing to look at any new schemes

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they may dream up, but in return we should press very hard for British firmness at the moment of truth.

Berlin is no place for compromise and our general friendliness and eagerness for improvement on many other points really requires strength here in order to be rightly understood.

McG. B.

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